Export of wheat

869. PROF. C. LAKSHMANNA: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) what is the target fixed for the export of wheat from India during 1986-87;

(b) what is the price at which wheat will be exported; and

(c) what are the names of the countries to which wheat will be exported and whether any specific contract has so far been entered into with any country for the export of wheat?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI BRAHM DUTT): (a) Export of wheat during 1986-87 will depend on the international trading environment and exportable surpluses available in the country.

(b) The prevailing international prices are taken into account while concluding contracts for export of wheat.

(c) Contracts have been concluded for export of wheat to Nicaragua, Vietnam, Nepal, Jordan, and DPR Korea. These include export of wheat as commodity loan to Vietnam, and as gift to Nicaragua.

Killing of Indian fishermen by the Sri Lankan Navy

†870. SHRI V. GOPALSAMY:
SHRI K. GOPALAN:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) how many Indian fishermen were killed during the last three years by the Sri Lankan Navy, year-wise;

(b) whether any compensation has been paid by the Sri Lankan Government to the next of kin of the deceased, if not, what are the reasons therefor;

(c) whther Government of India has demanded any such compensation from Sri Lanka, if not, what are the reasons therefor;

(d) whether some Indian Nationals were recently killed by the Sri Lankan Navy, if so, the details of the incident and also the action taken by Government in this regard; and

(e) what steps are being taken to protect the Indian fishermen in future?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI K. R. NARAYANAN): (a) According to information available with the Government of India the cases of the deaths of Indian fishermen, reported during the last three yeras are as follows:

1983	Nil
1984	1
1985	5
1986	11

(including 1 missing presumed dead)

(b) No compensation has been paid by the Sri Lankan Government to the next of the kin of the deceased.

(c) The question of compensation has been taken up with the Sri Lankan authorities.

(d) Reports have been received regarding two recent incidents in which Indian Fisrermen have been killed. In one incident on June 27, 1986 a Sri Lankan naval vessel rammed the Indian fishing boat 18—264 causing it to sink. Four of the five crew members on the Indian fishing boat were rescused by the Sri Lankan naval vessel, but one fisherman is still missing and is presumed dead.

On July 1, two Indian fishing boats, numbered STP-23 RM-423 and IP-23 RAM-120 went in search of a missing Indian fishing boat (No. STP-23, RM-148) in Sri Lankan waters after taking permission from the Sri Lankan Navy. According to reports received, while the boats were engaged in their sarch operations (in Sri Lankan waters), they were intercepted by the Sri Lankan security personnel, who

†Previously Unstarred Question 527, transferred from the 24th July, 1986.

reportedly shot and killed nine out of the ten fishermen.

The Indian High Commission in Colombo have taken up this matter with the concerned Sri Lankan authorities and conveyed Government of India's grave concern about those incidents and the unprovoked violence by the Sri Lankan Navy against Indian fishing boats and Indian fishermen. The High Commission has also informed the Sri Lankan authorities that recurrence of such incidents would result in the concerned Indian authorities having to take appropriate measures to protect Indian fishermen, which could lead to avoidable consequences and misunderstanding.

(e) The Coast Guard and Indian Naval authorities have been given clear directions to ensure the safety of our fishermen and also to prevent their straying across the maritime boundary into Sri Lankan waters. Our Coast Guard ships are under directions to maintain utmost vigilance and to intensify night patrols. A Coast Guard station at Mandapam provides logistical support to Coast Guard ships operating in the area and maintains a close liaison with the Tamil Nadu State Government authorities in Rameshwaram. Coast Guard ship 'Avvaiyyar' has been rebased at Madras to augment resources in the East coast particularly Palk Bay. In addition, one Work Boat has been positioned at Mandapam to intensify patrolling. Additional vessels are being acquired to be based at Mandapam to intensify patrolling and to provide help to our fishermen.

Purchase of raw jute in West Bengal

871. SHRI CHITTA BASU: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to refer to the reply to Unstarred question 1538-B given in the Rajya Sabha on May 9, 1986 and state:

(a) whether the Prime Minister has assured at Calcutta on July 1, 1986, that the entire raw jute in West Bengal in the current season, would be purchhased by the Central Government;

(b) if so, what steps have been been taken in that direction;

(c) whether it is a fact that jute industry is facing a crisis due to competition from the synthetic substitute; and

(d) if so, what steps Government have taken to save the industry?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI KHURSHID ALAM KHAN): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) and (d) A statement is attached.

Statement

It is fact that jute industry is facing stiff competition from synthetic substitutes. The Government has been taking corrective measures from time to time to safeguard the interests of jute industry. The measures taken include:—

(i) Purchase of jute goods by Government (DGS&D) from jute industry on cost plus basis;

(ii) In the present Union budget, excise duty has been imposed on DHDPE/PP tapes and import duty on granules has also been marginally increased;

(iii) Persuading other user Departments to encourage use of more jute bags instead of synthetic substitutes for packing fertilizers and compulsory use of 100 per cent new new jute bags by cement industry;

(iv) Providing higher cash compensatory support for export of jute goods;

(v) Introducing a Scheme of buffer stocking of raw jute so as to ensure availability of jute to mills at reasonable prices;

(vi) Improving the competitiveness of jute goods vis-a-vis synthetic substitutes through R&D measures.

†Previously Unstarred Question 639, transferred from the 25th July, 1986.